

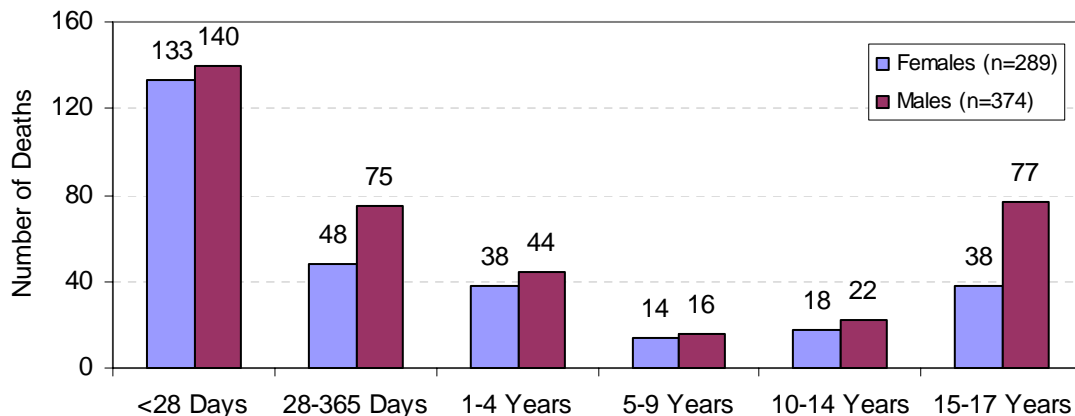


## 2006 CHILD FATALITY REVIEW FOR MARICOPA COUNTY

### DEMOGRAPHICS

During 2006, 664 children who resided in Maricopa County died before reaching their 18<sup>th</sup> birthdays. Males accounted for 56 percent of child deaths in this county (n=374) and females accounted for 44 percent (n=289). One death was of a newborn of unknown gender. More males than females died in each age group, with the greatest disparity among children ages 15 through 17 years. Figure 1 shows deaths among children by gender and age group.

**Figure 1. Deaths Among Children by Gender and Age Group, Maricopa County, Arizona 2006 (n=664)**



Does not include one newborn of unknown gender

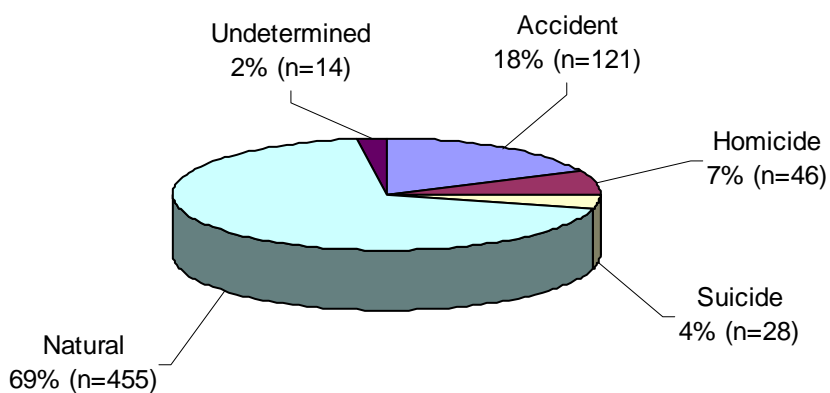
Deaths were over-represented among African American and Hispanic children in Maricopa County. African American children comprised six percent of the population but 11 percent of the fatalities (n=74). Hispanic children comprised 39 percent of the population but 49 percent of the fatalities (n=326). Non-Hispanic White children

comprised 49 percent of the population and 33 percent of the fatalities (n=221). The remaining deaths were among other races/ethnicities (six percent, n=43).

### CAUSE AND MANNER OF CHILD FATALITIES

Sixty-nine percent of deaths were natural (n=455); 18 percent were due to accidents (n=121); seven percent were homicides (n=46); four percent were suicides (n=28); and two percent were of undetermined manner (n=14). Figure 2 shows deaths among children by manner.

**Figure 2. Deaths Among Children by Manner,  
Maricopa County, Arizona 2006 (n=664)**



There were 455 child deaths classified as natural, including 252 from medical causes, 184 from prematurity, and 19 from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Sixty-seven children died in motor vehicle crashes, and 49 children died due to firearm-related injuries (including eight accidents, 25 homicides, and 16 suicides). There were 15 drowning fatalities. Table 1 shows deaths among children by cause and manner.

<b>Table 1. Deaths Among Children by Cause and Manner, Maricopa County, Arizona 2006 (n=664)</b>						
<b>Cause</b>	<b>Accident</b>	<b>Homicide</b>	<b>Suicide</b>	<b>Natural</b>	<b>Undetermined</b>	<b>Total</b>
Medical*				252	3	<b>255</b>
Prematurity				184		<b>184</b>
Motor vehicle crash	67					<b>67</b>
Firearm	8	25	16			<b>49</b>
Suffocation/strangulation	19	2				<b>21</b>
SIDS				19		<b>19</b>
Blunt force trauma	2	14				<b>16</b>
Drowning	15					<b>15</b>
Undetermined	1	3			9	<b>13</b>
Hanging			9			<b>9</b>
Poisoning	1	1	2		2	<b>6</b>
Fall/crush	4		1			<b>5</b>
Fire/burn	4					<b>4</b>
Stabbing		1				<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>664</b>
*Excluding SIDS and prematurity						

Among the 67 motor vehicle crash deaths, 44 children were passengers, 12 children were driving, eight children were pedestrians, and one child was on a bicycle. Of the 44 vehicle passengers who died in crashes, 22 were in back seats and 16 were in front seats. For six children, the location in the vehicle was unknown. Five of the eight pedestrians who died in motor vehicle crashes were struck in driveways or parking areas.

## PREVENTABILITY

Child Fatality Review Teams consider a child's death preventable if something could have been done (by an individual such as the caretaker or supervisor, or by the community as a whole) that would have prevented the death. Local Child Fatality Review Teams determined that 35 percent of the deaths among Maricopa County children could have been prevented (n=235).

During the review of each child's death, teams identify factors believed to have contributed to the death. Although the presence of a contributing factor typically led to the determination that a death was preventable, this was not always the case. For example, the team might have concluded that an unsafe sleep environment (e.g. infant left sleeping on a couch) was a contributing factor in an unexpected infant death. However, the team may not have had sufficient information (e.g. autopsy report, adequate scene investigation) to determine if the death could have been prevented.

In Maricopa County, substance use was a contributing factor in 80 child deaths (12 percent), and lack of supervision contributed to 58 deaths (nine percent). Access to firearms was a contributing factor in 49 deaths (seven percent). Unsafe infant sleeping environments contributed to 44 deaths (seven percent), and lack of vehicle restraints

was a factor in 41 deaths (six percent). More than one factor may have been identified for each death. Table 2 shows the most common factors contributing to the deaths of child residents of Maricopa County.

<b>Table 2. Contributing Factors for Deaths Among Children, Maricopa County, Arizona 2006</b>		
<b>Factor*</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Drugs/alcohol	80	12%
Lack of supervision	58	9%
Access to firearms	49	7%
Unsafe infant sleep environment	44	7%
Lack of vehicle restraint	41	6%
Infant sleep position	33	5%
Excessive driving speed	28	4%
<b>*More than one factor may have been identified for each death</b>		

## **CHILD FATALITIES IN MARICOPA COUNTY COMPARED TO OTHER ARIZONA COUNTIES**

This section provides comparisons between the deaths of children who resided in Maricopa County and the deaths of children who resided in the remaining 14 Arizona counties. During 2006, 664 children who were residents of Maricopa County died, and 426 children died who were residents of the other 14 counties. Thirty-five percent of the deaths of Maricopa County children could have been prevented (n=235), and 41 percent of the child deaths in the remaining counties were determined to have been preventable (n=176).

Medical conditions were the leading cause of child deaths in Maricopa County (38 percent), as well as for the remainder of Arizona (36 percent). Prematurity accounted for 28 percent of deaths in Maricopa County but comprised 24 percent of child deaths in the rest of Arizona. Motor vehicle crashes accounted for ten percent of deaths in Maricopa County and 17 percent in the remaining counties. Table 3 shows the leading causes of child deaths for Maricopa County compared to the rest of Arizona.

<b>Table 3. Leading Causes of Child Deaths, Maricopa County, Arizona 2006</b>			
<b>Maricopa County (n=664)</b>		<b>Arizona, Excluding Maricopa County (n=426)</b>	
<b>Cause</b>	<b>Percent of Deaths</b>	<b>Cause</b>	<b>Percent of Deaths</b>
Medical	38%	Medical	36%
Prematurity	28%	Prematurity	24%
Motor vehicle crash	10%	Motor vehicle crash	17%

In Maricopa County, the largest percentage of deaths were natural (69 percent), and in the remaining counties, natural deaths accounted for 60 percent of child deaths. Accidents accounted for 18 percent of child deaths in Maricopa County, but 26 percent in the remaining counties. There was a larger percentage of homicides in Maricopa County (seven percent), compared to the rest of the state (four percent). Suicides accounted for four percent of child deaths in Maricopa County, and four percent in the remaining counties. Table 4 shows deaths among children by manner for Maricopa County compared to the rest of Arizona.

<b>Table 4. Deaths Among Children by Manner, Maricopa County, Arizona 2006</b>			
<b>Maricopa County (n=664)</b>		<b>Arizona, excluding Maricopa County (n=426)</b>	
<b>Manner</b>	<b>Percent of Deaths</b>	<b>Manner</b>	<b>Percent of Deaths</b>
Natural	69%	Natural	60%
Accident	18%	Accident	26%
Homicide	7%	Undetermined	5%
Suicide	4%	Homicide	4%
Undetermined	2%	Suicide	4%